

CURRENT TOPICS

A SURGICAL operation was performed in a novel way recently by George M. Harman of Savannah, Ga. The Savannah correspondent for the Chicago Tribune is authority for the story. Several weeks ago Doctor Harman was reported to be fatally ill. The Tribune correspondent tells the story in this way: "A month ago Dr. Harman was operating surgeon in a hospital case and during the operation he scratched the lower part of his face with the instrument he was using. An antiseptic preparation was applied and the doctor paid little attention to the matter. In a few days sepsis set in, starting at the corner of the mouth. Its progress was steady, accompanied by extreme pain. The side of his face became swollen and discolored, and the right eye closed. An abscess formed under the eye. Dr. Harman described the progress of the poison to physicians attending him and advised an incision. There were objections and Dr. Harman resolved to do the job himself. Weak and emaciated from pain, he instructed his servant to select certain instruments from the case in his office and bring them to him. The servant then supported him while the operation was in progress. Dr. Harman ran the lance from inside his mouth up almost to the eye. The cheek was severed from the bone and an opening made. Almost immediately Dr. Harman felt relief, and he has been improving ever since. Dr. Harman feared the poison would reach the cavity immediately under the eye. He said he knew if the poison reached the blood vessels and nerve which communicate directly with the eye he would live only a few hours."

AS A RESULT of the Northern Securities merger decision a desperate fight is on between the Harriman interests and the Hill and Morgan interests. Harriman seeks the control of the Northern Pacific to which ambition the Hill and Morgan interests vigorously object. In its issue of April 6, the St. Paul Dispatch says: "Laws of various western states, prohibiting parallel lines from owning or controlling each other, and which was so vigorously attacked by the securities company when the merger was being formed, have suddenly been found very advantageous to merger interests, inasmuch as they may be employed to prevent the Harriman people from getting control of the Northern Pacific. Laws which once threatened to break up the combination are to be employed in protecting it. This somewhat paradoxical situation came to light today, when it was learned that Attorney General Donovan of Montana, who had been hastily summoned to St. Paul by the Great Northern interests, was impertuned to use the strength of the Montana laws to prevent the Harriman interests, through the Oregon Short Line, from getting control of the Northern Pacific."

IN THE same article the dispatch says that Attorney General Donovan was closeted with the Great Northern officials for some time, and adds: "It is supposed that as soon as he returns to Montana he will prepare an action which will be commenced, if necessary, bringing into play the Montana laws prohibiting such consolidations. There are one or two other western states which have similar laws, and the legal departments of these states will be interrogated as to their willingness to accept. That Montana has been asked to take the matter up is confirmed in a seemingly official statement by the Great Northern interests, as follows: "The question of the legality of the purpose outlined in the petition will be fought in the preliminary battle and is admittedly a ground on which the company will oppose the petition. The right of the Oregon Short Line to acquire a majority interest in the Northern Pacific will be questioned, since, under the laws of Montana and other states, to which the western line is subject, there is a grave doubt that it could legally hold the Northern Pacific, if it so desired. The laws, the company will contend, prevent the Oregon Short Line from either owning or voting the stock which it demands."

IN JERSEY CITY on April 6 an order was issued to show cause why an injunction should not be granted restraining the Northern Securities company from holding a stockholders' meeting on

April 21; from distributing any stock of the Northern Pacific Railway company and the Great Northern Railway company and from taking any action in regard to the reduction of its capital stock. An Associated press dispatch explains: "The bill for the injunction was asked by the Continental Securities company, which asked the court of chancery to compel the Northern Securities company to return to the original stockholders of the Northern Pacific railway, and of the Great Northern Railway company the stocks formerly held by them upon the same terms under which the stock of the two companies was acquired by the Northern Securities company. The complainant company holds stock in the Northern Securities company."

AT THE annual conference of the Mormon church, held at Salt Lake City, April 6, President Joseph F. Smith made an important statement on the subject of polygamy. President Smith's statement is as follows: "Inasmuch as there are numerous reports in circulation that plural marriages have been entered into contrary to the official declaration of President Woodruff of September 26, 1890, commonly called the manifesto, which was issued by President Woodruff and adopted by the church at its general conference October 6, 1890, which forbids any marriage violative of the law of the land, I, Joseph F. Smith, president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, here affirm and declare that no such marriages have been solemnized with the sanction, consent or knowledge of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. And I hereby announce that all such marriages are prohibited, and if any officer or member of the church shall assume to solemnize or enter into any such marriage, he will be deemed in transgression against the church and will be liable to be dealt with according to the rules and regulations thereof and excommunicated therefrom." The church members present unanimously adopted a resolution by Francis M. Lyman which resolution is as follows: "Resolved, That we the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, in general conference assembled, hereby approve and indorse the statement and declaration of President Joseph F. Smith, just made to this conference, concerning plural marriages, and will support the courts and the church in the enforcement thereof."

NEWSPAPER readers near very much these days concerning Marquis Ito and an article printed in a recent issue of the London World may be of interest. In this article, the writer says that Japan owes to Marquis Ito in a very great measure the position which she now holds in the world and that but for him Japan might be today a second China. Marquis Ito is described by this writer in this way: "He belongs by birth to what we should call the lower middle class, and has therefore had neither wealth nor influential connections to give him a helping hand. None the less, at an age when in England he would have been counted a boy he was already a minister plenipotentiary arranging terms of peace with the great powers of Europe. For he had the good luck in very early days—it was a pure piece of luck—to attract the attention of the old emperor Komei Yenko, who was so struck by his extraordinary ability and all-round cleverness that he took his education into his own hands and set to work to train him for a political career. In 1867 the old emperor died, but his successor, Moutsouhito, had just as high an opinion of Ito as his father had had, and as soon as he had power in his hands he made him governor of Hiogo. A year later he made him finance minister, and from that day to this Ito has practically ruled Japan."

SECRETARY OF WAR TAFT recently delivered a speech at a banquet given by a political club at Peoria, Ill. Newspaper dispatches say that Mr. Taft on this occasion "clearly outlined the course to be pursued by the administration in the Philippines and answered the challenge of the democratic party as to the date on which the administration proposed to grant independence to the Filipinos by stating that the time for a final decision was not at hand, nor would it be for probably several generations. He even went fur-

ther when he declared that at the end of that time, when the Filipinos had reached a stage where they were capable of self-government, they might be so well satisfied with the government of this country that they would prefer to maintain a relation like that which now binds Australia and Canada to Great Britain."

AN IMPORTANT bill has been reported by the house committee on banking and currency. The bill's stated purpose is "to improve currency conditions." The Washington correspondent for the Chicago Chronicle, referring to this measure, says: "The first section of the bill repeals the law which prohibits customs receipts from being deposited in national banks. The result of the present law in this matter, the report says, is unnecessarily to tie up the money of the country. The report says that if states and municipalities should lock up the proceeds of local taxation as the national government locks up its receipts the effect would be disastrous, and yet there is as much reason for such a course in the one case as in the other. The second section repeals the monthly \$3,000,000 limit on bank note retirement. The report says the repeal of this restriction will give to the national bank note circulation all the elasticity which it is possible for a bond-secured circulation to have. The re-coinage of silver dollars into subsidiary silver coins is provided in the third section of the bill. The limit of \$100,000,000 as the total amount of subsidiary silver coins that can be in existence at any time is repealed by this section."

IN ITS report to the house the committee says that in July, 1904, the bullion from which the subsidiary coin may be made will be exhausted; that there is in the treasury 578,012,639 silver dollars, or, according to Secretary Shaw, 500 carloads of thirty tons each. Secretary Shaw is quoted as saying that it would cost \$100,000 to recoin this money and that it is worth in bullion less than half its face value in dollars. The bill reported proposes to coin into subsidiary silver all these silver dollars as fast as the secretary of the treasury shall order. The Chronicle says: "Relief to the treasury department in its inability to meet the demand for small bills, owing to the manner in which the present law limits their issuance, is sought to be remedied by the removal of these limitations. On this point the report says: 'It is probably true that the inability of the treasury to meet the demand for small bills, combined with the shortage in subsidiary coin in recent years, has compelled the retention of small bills in circulation until much of that form of money has become ragged and filthy and produced conditions which have fully justified the vigorous crusade for "clean money" which has been recently inaugurated. It is believed, however, that with the large discretion given to the treasury and the national banks under the provisions of this bill, supplemented by an abundant supply of subsidiary coin, much of the cause for complaint will be removed. An ideal sanitary currency, however, can only be secured by the substitution of subsidiary coin for all \$1 and \$2 bills and improved methods of redemption for paper money of denominations of \$5 and upwards.'"

ONE of the most interesting political contests in recent history was that in the Sixth congressional district of Alabama, wherein Captain Richmond P. Hobson contested with Congressman Bankhead for the democratic congressional nomination. Although Captain Hobson was a bit new in politics, he made it very interesting for the congressman. Hobson carried Hale county, his own home, by a majority of 600, but the result at the primaries was Mr. Bankhead's renomination, he having had perhaps 1,200 majority in the primaries throughout the district.

SYDNEY H. SHADBOLT, who is largely interested in a 130,000-acre timber plantation in the city of Vera Cruz, contributes an interesting article to the Mexican Herald on the purchase and marketing of mahogany. Speaking of mahogany generally, Mr. Shadbolt says: "Mahogany has been esteemed a very valuable wood for more than 200 years, and during all that time